

Public comment period set for casino proposals

Written by Administrator
Saturday, 09 August 2014 03:49 -

Joseph Spector and Jon Campbell, Albany Bureau 11:41 p.m. EDT August 8, 2014



In this Nov. 6, 2013, file photo, people gamble at the Monticello Casino and Raceway in Monticello. New York is gearing up to take applications for four new upstate casinos at a time when some gambling operations in the region are in a slump. A state siting board is scheduled to seek casino applications in March, four months after voters approved a state constitutional amendment to allow Las Vegas-style casinos beyond Indian land. (Photo: Seth Wenig/AP)

ALBANY — The public will have a chance next month to weigh in on the 16 proposals for private casinos in New York.

The state Gaming Facility Location Board is expected in late fall to give four casino licenses to private developers as part of a plan approved by voters last year to permit up to seven private casinos statewide.

The board will hold daylong comment periods in Poughkeepsie, Ithaca and Albany on the 16 remaining applications for licenses. It will be the only chance for the public to provide comment to the board.

The board's three public comment events in September will "provide opportunity for members of the public in each eligible region to comment before the board in support of or opposition to any particular applicant's proposal within the respective region," according to a news release.

The events will run from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. The Albany hearing will be Sept. 22; the Poughkeepsie event will be Sept. 23, and the Ithaca event will be Sept. 24.

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The five-member casino-siting board — chaired by Kevin Law, president of a Long Island business association — will award the first four licenses to proposals in three areas of the state: the Albany region, a Catskills region that includes Orange County, and a Southern Tier area that includes part of the Finger Lakes.

The Catskills region by far received the most interest from casino suitors, in large part because of its proximity to New York City.

Eight developers — including casino giants like Caesars Entertainment and Genting Group — put forward proposals for nine different casinos. Six of those casinos are proposed in Orange County, including one from Genting in Tuxedo, just 40 miles from New York City.

Three developers are vying for a license in the Southern Tier, including Tioga Downs Racetrack in Nichols, Tioga County; Traditions Resort & Casino in Johnson City, Broome County; and Lago Resort & Casino in Tyre, Seneca County, which is proposed by Rochester mall magnate Thomas Wilmot.

The board said it wanted to pick venues and cities for the comment periods where there are no casino proposals, but that are still within the licensing regions.

The state originally received 17 casino applications from 16 developers, but the siting board on Thursday invalidated a proposal from a group in Amsterdam, Fulton County, because its application was incomplete.

Earlier in September, the casino applicants will make their formal presentations to the board in Albany. The presentations will take place Sept. 8-9 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. in meeting Room 6 at the Empire State Plaza.

The presentations will be open to the public and will be streamed on the state Gaming Commission's website (www.gaming.ny.gov).

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Each applicant can give a 45-minute presentation and allow 15 minutes for questions from the board. The board has yet to announce the order of the presentations.

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If you go

Meetings will be Web cast.

Hudson Valley/Catskills

Sept. 23, 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

The Grandview, 176 Rinaldi Blvd.

Poughkeepsie

Capital Region

Sept. 22, 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

Albany Holiday Inn Turf

205 Wolf Road, Albany

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Eastern Southern Tier

Sept. 24, 8 a.m.-8 p.m.

Hotel Ithaca

222 S. Cayuga St., Ithaca

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